

## news & notes

### 10 WAYS TO PROMOTE JOB SAFETY

1. **Know your job.** Follow all instructions, and ask your supervisor about anything you don't understand before you begin.
2. **Use required PPE** while you work.
3. **Use tools and equipment properly.** Select the right ones for the job, and make sure they're in good condition.
4. **Practice good housekeeping.** Keep work areas clean and neat. Clean spills promptly. Dispose of scrap properly.
5. **Develop good lifting habits.**
6. **Avoid falls.** Watch where you're going. Climb ladders carefully.
7. **Dress safely for work.** Wear sturdy, low-heeled shoes. Wear short sleeves or long sleeves buttoned at the wrist. Don't wear jewelry around machinery.
8. **Be alert around machinery.** Stay clear of moving equipment and overhead loads. Never get on or off moving equipment. Never bypass machine guards. Follow lockout/tagout procedures and all warning signs and tags.
9. **Report accidents and near misses.** Determining the causes helps prevent further incidents.
10. **Avoid horseplay.** It can easily get out of control and cause serious harm. Discourage others from engaging in such activities.



Marine Operations Center

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## Choose the *Safest* Way

### Don't take chances on the job

*Webster's Dictionary* says that being "safe" means being "secure from the threat of danger, harm, or loss."

With that definition in mind, why should following or enforcing safety rules ever be a problem? Isn't everyone interested in being free from danger, harm, or loss? Why would anyone, through negligence or disinterest, create unsafe situations for himself or herself—and others?

One reason may be that certain situations don't appear to be potential accident producers. For example:

*Suppose you need a stepladder. You find one with a leg broken off, but the ladder can still stand. If you use this ladder, the potential for an accident is obvious. Now suppose the leg isn't broken, it's only cracked. The danger is no longer obvious.*

A safety-minded person would recognize the possibility of an accident anytime a ladder is used, and would inspect the ladder, discover the crack, and tag it for repair. Result? No accident.

But maybe there wouldn't have been an accident anyway. How would you know?

Here's another situation:

*Dwayne eats his lunch on the stairs and leaves a soda can on the step. Teresa comes along and sees the can.*

If she picks it up, will she prevent an accident? Who knows for sure?

There's one thing you can know, however. The workplace is a lot safer when the ladder with the cracked leg is removed from service and the soda can is removed from the stairs.

Since your goal is to protect your safety and that of your co-workers, you can't afford to take chances. You can't skip a step in a safety procedure or neglect to use assigned PPE. You can't take shortcuts or fool around while working.

Don't tempt fate. Always choose the safest way.



## news & notes

### **MATERIALS HANDLING SAFETY**

Follow these materials handling safety tips:

- **Plan ahead**—don't make a move until you've thought it out.
- **Use common sense** and don't overdo—get help with loads that are too heavy or bulky to handle alone.
- **Keep alert to hazards** while you work.
- **Follow all safety rules** related to your job, and don't take any chances.
- **Use safe lifting** and carrying techniques.
- **Use extra caution when handling hazardous materials**—consult the MSDS for safety precautions. Report spills or leaks immediately.
- **Always wear appropriate PPE.**
- **Use materials handling equipment** properly. Don't exceed its load capacity.
- **Know what your co-workers are doing.**
- **Tell co-workers what you're doing.**
- **Don't block aisles, passageways, or doorways.** Make sure you have enough clearance to move through these areas.

### **CAN TOO LITTLE SLEEP MAKE YOU FAT?**

A recent study finds that as total sleep time decreases, body weight tends to increase. Although researchers admit that their study does not indicate that sleep deprivation is the only factor in weight gain, they say that it seems to play a role.

Other studies suggest that sleep deprivation is associated with the secretion of hormones that regulate appetite.

# Prevent Wrist Problems

## New treatment for carpal tunnel looks promising

Carpal tunnel syndrome is a common work-related problem. Now a new study finds that nighttime rest can do a world of good for those who suffer from the syndrome. Researchers from the University of Michigan Health System and VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System found that nighttime splinting can effectively improve hand and wrist discomfort for active workers with early signs of the condition.

According to lead researcher Dr. Robert A. Werner, people with carpal tunnel syndrome lose more time from work than any other job-related injury. "Additionally," says Werner, "carpal tunnel syndrome is frequently misdiagnosed and there's very little scientific research to show which initial treatments are actually the most effective." Werner says nighttime splinting reduces stress on the peripheral nerve in the wrist, allowing it to heal. Splinting also avoids awkward wrist positions during sleep.

Werner and his colleagues studied 112 workers at a Midwest auto plant with symptoms of carpal tunnel syndrome, but who had not yet sought treatment. Those outfitted with splints fared much better during the 6-week study than those without them. Splinting appears to be an effective and inexpensive means of managing carpal tunnel.

# Back-to-School Safety

## Important safety rules for the school bus

Now that the kids are back in school, wise parents will take a moment to review these school bus safety rules with their children. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration advises parents to make sure their kids know to:

- ✍ **Stay on the sidewalk** on their way to and from the bus stop.
- ✍ **Wait for the crossing guard** to tell them when it's safe to cross, if there is a guard. If not, they need to cross only in crosswalks, never in the middle of the street. Wait for the WALK sign where there is a light, and always look both ways before they cross, even if the light is green.
- ✍ **Keep out of the road** while waiting for the bus. In fact, stay at least five big steps from the curb.
- ✍ **Be careful getting on and off the bus.** If they drop something getting on or off, they need to tell the driver before they pick it up.
- ✍ **Stay in their seats** on the bus until it comes to a full stop.
- ✍ **Always keep away from the back of the bus.** That's the danger zone. The driver can't see them there.

You've probably said it all before, of course. But these simple rules are so important to your child's safety that they bear repeating. Choose a quiet time to talk when you have your child's undivided attention.



# Chemical Labels

## What you don't know could hurt you

Test your knowledge of label information with this quiz:

1. Which of these words on a label indicates the highest degree of hazard?  
a. Warning      b. Danger      c. Caution
2. If a chemical is "reactive," this means it:  
a. Is effective only when mixed with other substances  
b. Can catch fire easily  
c. Is hazardous if mixed with other substances
3. In addition to words, how else do labels provide hazard information?  
a. Color codes  
b. Color and number codes  
c. Color codes, number codes, or symbols
4. What kind of hazard is an illness caused by inhaling chemical vapors?  
a. Physical hazard    b. Health hazard    c. Serious hazard
5. Which type of illness may not be immediately obvious?  
a. Chronic      b. Acute      c. Toxic
6. What do you do if there is no label or the label is too damaged to read?  
a. Treat the substance as hazardous and proceed with the job.  
b. Open the container and look inside to see what's in it.  
c. Do not use the substance.

**Answers:** (1) b (2) c (3) c (4) b (5) a (6) c

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# When Seconds Count

## Are you prepared for medical emergencies?

Would you know what to do if a co-worker:

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| ◆ Stopped breathing?  | ◆ Was unconscious but breathing? |
| ◆ Broke a bone in a fall?   | ◆ Was bleeding heavily?          |
| ◆ Was choking on a piece of food?                                       | ◆ Suffered a heart attack?       |
| ◆ Had a seizure?  | ◆ Fainted?                       |
| ◆ Had an eye injury?  | ◆ Received an electric shock?    |
| ◆ Hit his or her head or injured his or her back in a fall?             |                                  |
| ◆ Went into shock as a result of a serious injury or allergic reaction? |                                  |
| ◆ Suffered serious chemical or heat burns?                              |                                  |
| ◆ Inhaled hazardous chemical vapors?                                    |                                  |
| ◆ Suffered from heat exhaustion or heatstroke?                          |                                  |

If you don't know what to do, consider taking a first-aid and CPR course. Even without this training, you can still help in a medical emergency by:

- ✚ Calling for emergency medical help
- ✚ Keeping calm and helping others keep calm and focused on helping the victim
- ✚ Keeping the victim comfortable until help arrives
- ✚ Escorting EMTs to the scene of the accident
- ✚ Providing information to help accident investigators

## news & notes

### WHAT YOU *MUST* KNOW ABOUT PPE

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration says that you must know:

- ✚ When PPE is necessary
- ✚ What type of PPE is required
- ✚ How to put it on, take it off, fit and adjust it, and wear it properly
- ✚ The limitations of each type of PPE you use (in other words, the extent to which it can protect you against a hazard)
- ✚ Proper care, maintenance, useful life, and disposal of PPE

If you don't know all of these things about the PPE you use, ask your supervisor to fill in your knowledge.

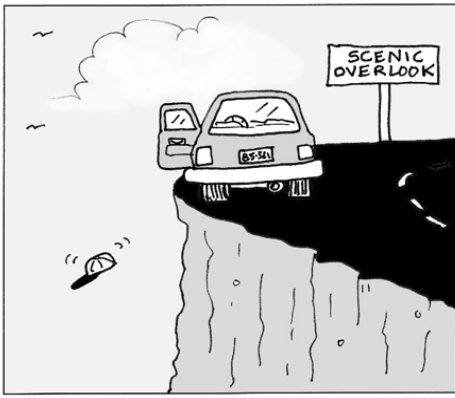
### GOT A SAFETY SUGGESTION?

Got any suggestions about how to make the workplace safer? Don't keep them to yourself.

They don't have to be big ideas. Suggesting that we put up a warning sign could prevent an injury. Moving frequently used supplies to a lower storage shelf could eliminate the need for using a stepladder and decrease the risk of people falling when they get supplies.

Safety is in the details. But big ideas are welcome, too.

The point is that we all need to be thinking about ways to make our jobs safer. If you have an idea about how to do that, talk to your supervisor. He or she can help you write it up and submit it to the MOC Safety committee.



To avoid back injury, be careful getting out of your vehicle.

## news & notes

### NEW TREATMENT GETS PEOPLE BACK TO WORK AFTER BACK INJURY

Getting back to work after a back injury is often a matter of regaining lost confidence. A Dutch university research team suggests that a “graded activity program” can help people return to the job more quickly than traditional approaches.

After undergoing medical tests to determine that patients have no lasting physical problem, participants in the study attended hour-long twice-weekly exercise sessions. These sessions included tasks that might have been part of the workers’ job duties.

After 3 weeks, participants were asked to establish a date for returning to work. Using that date, therapists developed a program that began with easy, confidence-building tasks and gradually stepped up the pace each session. All the tasks had to be completed regardless of pain.

Physical therapists were trained to ignore complaints of pain, and to keep the focus on the patients’ progress. Those involved in the program were able to return to work weeks sooner than patients treated traditionally.

The researchers say that although the exercises may cause pain, they do not cause harm, an important distinction for those returning to work. It’s a matter of focusing more on function than pain.

**CAUTION:** Before beginning any treatment program for a back injury, consult with your doctor to make sure it’s safe for you.

# Good Housekeeping

## An under-rated secret to a safe workplace

There’s a direct connection between clean, well-organized workspaces and safe, productive workplaces. Why?

Because good housekeeping:

- ✓ **Minimizes or eliminates** accident and fire hazards
- ✓ **Maintains** safe and healthy working conditions
- ✓ **Saves** time, money, materials, space, and effort
- ✓ **Improves** productivity and quality
- ✓ **Creates** a more pleasant work environment

On the other hand, poor housekeeping creates hazards, such as:

- ✗ **Slips** from slick or wet floors
- ✗ **Trips and falls** from objects or materials left in walkways and work areas
- ✗ **Collisions** caused by poorly stored materials, overhanging or protruding objects, and materials and equipment stored in aisles
- ✗ **Fire hazards** from buildup of trash or other combustible materials, improperly stored flammables, and blocked emergency exits
- ✗ **Health hazards** created by spilled, leaking, or improperly stored chemicals

Good housekeeping is a daily mission that must be tackled with energy, focus, and purpose. Plan for it *and* sustain it to keep your workplace safe.

# Anatomy of a Safe Lift

## Safe lifting is as simple as one, two, three

When you lift an object, your backbone must support your weight as well as the weight of the object you’re lifting. That puts extra strain on your spine. By using proper body mechanics, the muscles in your back, abdomen, buttocks, and thighs all work together to support your spine and prevent injury.

Here’s how to lift safely in three easy steps:

- 1. Assume the safe lifting position.** Stand close to the object with a wide stance. Keep your feet turned out and your heels down. Squat by bending at the hips and knees so that your ears, shoulders, and hips form a nearly straight line.
- 2. Prepare to lift.** Pull the load close to your body, which reduces pressure on your back, and grasp the object firmly. Tighten your stomach muscles.
- 3. Let your legs do the lifting.** Maintaining the natural curves of your spine, rise from the squatting position by using your legs to power the lift. Do not bend over at the neck, shoulders, or waist as you lift.

When you lower the load, face the spot you’ve chosen and lower the load slowly—again by using your legs, not your back. Bend your knees and lower your body with the load, keeping your back comfortably straight.